

ASOR Newsletter

# AMERICAN SCHOOLS OF ORIENTAL RESEARCH

JERUSALEM AND BAGHDAD

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL NEWSLETTER

Confidential

Not for publication

Newsletter #1

1951-52

Jerusalem, August 14, 1951.

Dear Friends:

The activities of the Jerusalem School in which our friends would be interested seem to warrant only one Newsletter for the summer of 1951. In many ways, as you know, the summer is given over to a programme of straightening away after the previous year's activities and preparation for the coming year. This does not mean, of course, that the School ceases to be place where students can live and work and from which they can receive help in planning their activities here. We have had a constant stream of such visitors although few of them have stayed for any length of time.

The Winnetts left by car for Beirut on June 8 and, having negotiated the pitfalls of immigration, and particularly customs, successfully, they caught their ship and enjoyed a rather lengthy cruise on their way home. We all missed them very much. Jane their daughter, particularly, added a youthful touch to the scene here and there is no doubt about who picked up Arabic most quickly and with the best accent! Father Murphy, one of our Fellows, had departed before the Winnetts but we had the Mortons with us until June 17. They continued to make their jaunts through the Old City and around of the places close in to Jerusalem which they had not had the chance to see, being too busy during the year going to far-off places or working down at the School "digs". Miss Mowry was at the School off and on nearly all summer. She had one trip to Iraq and Iran and then returned to Jerusalem. She seemed to be glad to get back. In fact, most of us who have been around the School for any length of time, look upon it in a very possessive way and consider it as home. She finally departed on the way back to America at the end of July, carrying with her great quantities of baggage including samples of archaeological materials from Tulul Abu el-'Alayiq and Dhiban released for export to member institutions. We were exceedingly sorry to see her go. She had been here for thirteen months. Mr. John Thompson, Director of the Australian Institute of Archaeology and Honorary Fellow at the School departed in May and should be home in Melbourne by now.

Our Honorary Lecturer, Dr. Williams from Iliffe School of Theology, who had given us good assistance at Dhiban, remained at the School until July 5 when he departed for Egypt. We showed our appreciation by sending him to the hospital for a few days before he left with an acute attack of stomach trouble. Dr. Kuist of Princeton Theological Seminary has been a frequent visitor during the spring and summer. His many journeys to and from through the Middle East have made us all just a little envious. Dr. Lovelace of Wake Forest was here for five weeks during the summer studying pottery in the Museum and the School. His great moment came when I introduced him to Awni Bey Dajani, the Inspector of Antiquities, who was discarding a great deal of pottery from some of his digs. Dr. Lovelace was bitten by the bug and had to buy another suitcase to carry all his things home. Father Myles Bourke of New York was with us for about three weeks in July. When we were held indoors by the curfew, we introduced him to C. naster and the four of us (with

Dr. Lovelace) enjoyed a couple of quiet evenings that way.

Mr. C. Hillen of Holland, whom we knew when he was studying at the Oriental Institute in Chicago, stayed with us for a few days after an archaeological tour of inspection in the Near East and some original work in North Syria.

Dr. Cuyler Young of Princeton visited us for a short time in August. It was good to talk over Near East affairs with him for his experience and contacts throughout this whole area are very broad. He is looking forward to a few weeks at home before returning to Iran. Miss Ava B. Milam of the Food and Agriculture Organization, Technical Assistance Mission to Syria and Miss Dorothea McDowell, National Director of the Y.W.C.A., Lebanon and Syria, have been with us in this latter part of August. Visitors for shorter periods were Mr. Henry Shepard of the American University in Cairo and Mr. McFadden of Maxbass, N.D., and Mrs. Brown of Silverspring, Md., both of whom have been teaching in Iran for the last year. Jerusalem is a mecca of touring groups of all kinds and many of them have come to see the famous American School of Oriental Research, and to chat about our activities or to ask advice on places to see and how to get there.

It can be seen that my wife and I have not spent our summer in solitude. We have even made a few short trips for the benefit of visitors and ourselves. So many antiquities purporting to come from Samaria-Sebastiya and Hebron have come into Jerusalem for sale that we thought that trips to those sites might be rewarding. At Hebron we made our tour through the mosque and saw the richly ornamented cenotaphs of the monastery of Mar Saba and had lunch there and were greeted very warmly by the brothers. The visit to Samaria had, by way of archaeological interest, only the discovery of a large piece of a Greek inscription which one of the natives had for sale. I later reported it to Mr. Dajani. As he was not interested in acquiring it we bought it for the School collection on a later trip. Our major expedition, however, was to Jerash and Ajlun. For those who have made this trip on the past, it will be of interest to know that the new road with macadam surface is progressing very well and there is very little bad road to traverse. The story was somewhat different on our way back via Ajlun to the Jordan Valley. The road here is abominable until one comes out to the new north-south road running parallel to the Jordan on the eastern side. It now extends to well north of Jisr Damieh. Jerash was impressive and beautiful as usual, but the ruins gain much from their setting in and above the very lush valley with its groves of figs, olives, walnuts and fruit trees and the welcome sound of running water as it flows below the old Roman bridge. Unfortunately Ajlun had its streets all torn up to lay down drains and there was no way of getting the car anywhere near the old castle. There was no time to walk so far so we had to content ourselves with admiring it from a distance perched on the top of its crag.

Recently we took Mr. Dajani on a tour of inspection, the main object of which was to visit Pere de Vaux's excavations at Tell el-Far'ah near Nablus. He is doing a beautiful piece of work as all who have read his lucid reports in Revue Biblique will recognize. The physical problem of removing debris is lightened this year by the use of a small railway - the one left behind by the German excavators of Balatah. Our personally conducted tour of the excavation including the new recording and dining building showed us all phases of a well-conducted dig from actual removal of earth to the draughting of plans, recording, drawing and repair of pottery, the experiments with aërial (kite) photography etc. He is assisted by a well-trained and interested staff who were only too glad to reveal all the fine points of their methods.

That event which probably made our friends at home think of us with most concern was the assassination of His Majesty King Abdullah and its after-

math..It was indeed a tragedy,all the more so as it took place just as he was entering Al-Aqsa Mosque in the Haram area. That such an act should take place there horrified all good Muslims and many of us for whom the site holds so many memories connected with the lives of saints and saviours,Christian,Muslim and Jewish.It so happened that we were standing at the gate of the School when the King's party went by on the way from his Jerusalem house to the Mosque.He looked very fine and dignified in his completely white clothing.Only five minutes later we heard the shots,at first singly and then followed by machine gun fire.Miss Mowry was caught in the cross-fire at the Damascus Gate but managed to reach the School unscathed. Wild rumours circulated of course,but at no time then,or in the following days were we in any danger. In spite of newspaper and radio reports to the contrary there was no sign of antiforeign feeling and at no time was it deemed necessary to provide foreign institutions with police guards. The curfew was no great inconvenience and was lifted after the third day. We of course followed general practice in flying the School flag at half mast and in sending a message of condolence to His Royal Majesty,the Regent,the Emir Na'if. We hope that days of peace,security and justice will soon return to the Holy Land.

Perhaps the biggest project on hand this summer was that of cleaning up the workshop in the basement.The normal accumulation of material was such as to make it impossible to walk around down there,let alone work. My wife and I spent many days sorting,packing and re-arranging the materials so that now there is room to breathe.We hope that our arrangements to provide separate and well-lighted working spaces for pottery,coins,architectural pieces etc,will work out well. All materials of value have been marked and stowed away.We have been very pleased at the prompt and understanding letters we have had from Professor Glueck,Sellers,Kelso and others telling us how to dispose of their materials.We would appreciate it very much if institutions or individuals who know they have materials at the School would communicate with us as to their disposal.The attic and the shed still await us but I think the worst is over.

Mr. Baramki is no longer with us.He was on holiday during July and has just departed for Beirut with his family.He has accepted a position as Curator of the Museum of the American University of Beirut and part-time lecturer in Near East Archaeology.He seems to be delighted with the prospect and we are all glad that he has found a job whereby he can put his good knowledge of Near Eastern archaeology to use.His departure has thrown another job on my poor wife.She has added to her duties of secretary,book-keeper and general house-keeper,the job of librarian.She is busy trying to read all the books as they come in and has already gone through most back-numbers of the BASOR and Biblical Archaeologist by way of orientation.At least time does not hang heavily on her hands! Unfortunately she must leave me to return to America for a few month.When we came to Jerusalem last winter we did not expect to be staying on for a year and a half.That leaves many matters of personal business which must be taken care off,not to speak of the small daughter we left with her grandparents in Toronto.So for some month at least I shall be able to experience,in some small way,the life of a monk in Jerusalem.

Very soon now,Imran and I shall be driving to Beirut to meet the Reeds,I can perhaps say,thinking in terms of Newsletters,that "the next voice you hear will be that of our new Director."

My wife joins me in sending good wishes to all the friends and supporters of the School.

Cordially yours,

A.D.Tushingham,  
Acting Director.